



Testimony in Support of S.B 284, AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

Dear Chairs Abercrombie and Moore, Vice Chairs Lesser and Leeper, Ranking Members Berthel and Case, and Members of the Human Services Committee:

My name is Linda Youn and I am a resident of New Haven. I'm writing to communicate my strong support for **S.B. 284 - An Act Increasing the Age from Eight to Eighteen Years for an Income-Eligible Person to Obtain Medical Assistance Regardless of Immigration Status**. This bill would provide state-funded medical assistance to any child or young adult under the age of eighteen years of age, regardless of immigration status, whose household income does not exceed two hundred one percent of the federal poverty level, and who does not otherwise qualify for Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance 11 Program, or employer-sponsored insurance.

Connecticut's expansion of HUSKY last year to children ages 0-8 years was an important win for immigrants in the state, who have been predominantly challenged by the shortage of healthcare resources available to them. The passage of S.B 284 would expand this win by guaranteeing more access to programs like HUSKY that largely benefit low-income immigrant families and individuals. Undocumented immigrants without coverage must rely on health care safety net resources, such as public hospitals or community clinics, to access needed medical care. Despite serving as important access points, none of these resources is equivalent to having comprehensive health insurance coverage.

Growing up in a community made up of immigrants, I have seen firsthand the importance of health insurance and the struggles of being uninsured. Many of the people in my community have gone years without seeing a doctor, pushing back important exams that can help catch diseases earlier, because of the high out-of-pocket expenses that come with seeing a doctor. These exams are important in providing lifesaving preemptive services. Furthermore, in the state of Connecticut, the Migrant Policy Institute estimates that there are about 53,000 undocumented uninsured individuals in the state of Connecticut. Increasing the age of HUSKY coverage to 18 will drastically reduce the number of uninsured residents of Connecticut.

In conclusion, I urge you to expand healthcare to the immigrant population because it would allow them to receive the preventative treatment they deserve, reduce the uninsured rate in

Connecticut, and save the state money by decreasing uncompensated care costs. Connecticut can and should do better in promoting healthcare as a human right, rather than a commodity that only the wealthy can afford. I urge you to favorably vote this bill out of the Human Services Committee so that more immigrants in the state are able to access and afford health care that they're in desperate need of.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Linda Youn
New Haven, CT